



Isiah Leggett
County Executive

Darren M. Popkin
Sheriff

Domestic Violence Coordinating Council

March 9, 2017
Family Justice Center
600 Jefferson Plaza, Suite 500
Rockville, MD 20852

Meeting Minutes

Purpose of Meeting: Sixty third meeting to review the County's response to domestic violence and present committee reports. Councilmember Sidney Katz, Chair, convened the meeting at 5:30 PM.

In Attendance: The Honorable Sidney Katz, Chair (Montgomery County Council); Debbie Feinstein (Montgomery County Office of the State's Attorney); The Honorable Karla Smith (Circuit Court for Montgomery County); William Sollod, (Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services – Parole and Probation); Eshigo Okasili, Esq. (Community Member); Resa Levy (Community Member); and Thomas Manion, DVCC Staff (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff)

Guests: Lisa Mandel-Trupp (Office of Montgomery County Councilmember Sidney Katz); Captain James Humphries (Montgomery County Department of Police); Michael Subin (Criminal Justice Coordinating Commission); Mary Silva (Court Watch Montgomery); Lauren Brown (Yasha Circle Ministry); Smita Varia (Member of the Public); and Christopher Page (Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County)

Absent: The Honorable Rebecca Smondrowski (Montgomery County Public School – Board of Education); Teresa Bennett (Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services); Assistant Chief Russell Hamill (Montgomery County Department of Police); The Honorable John Moffett (District Court of Maryland for Montgomery County); Sheriff Darren Popkin (Montgomery County Office of the Sheriff); Angela Talley (Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation – Pre-trial Services); Nicole Drew (Montgomery County Commission for Women); Dorothy Fait, Esq. (Community Member); Cheryl Kravitz (Community Member); Sheila Kamdar (Community Member)

I. Welcome and Introductions

Sidney Katz welcomed all members and guests.

II. Approval of January Minutes

The minutes from January 12, 2017 DVCC meeting minutes were reviewed.

Resa Levy proposed a motion to approve the minutes without revision. The motion was seconded by Karla Smith and passed.

III. Announcements

Thomas Manion reminded all DVCC members to complete the Maryland Open Meetings Act training, which is available online via a link that was e-mailed to all members. Completion certificates should be e-mailed to Thomas Manion. If a member has already completed the training for this year, s/he is not required to do so again.

Thomas Manion reported that the annual meeting with the County Executive will be in a Town Hall style format this year. The DVCC has been invited to the Town Hall taking place on Tuesday, March 21st from 7pm-9pm. All members are encouraged to attend.

IV. Presentation: Conflict Resolution Center of Montgomery County

Christopher Page, Executive Director of the Conflict Resolution Center (CRC) of Montgomery County, provided DVCC members with information on the work of the CRC and how it relates to domestic violence. CRC is a non-profit organization that provides services to the Montgomery County community, including mediation, youth services, conflict management workshops, and training.

V. Committee Reports

A. Education and Outreach Committee

Debbie Feinstein (Chair) provided a comprehensive review of current planning efforts surrounding the Choose Respect Conference, which is on Sunday April 2nd at Richard Montgomery High School.

Debbie Feinstein reported that 328 people have already pre-registered, a number that far exceeds pre-registrations at this time last year. Additionally, student pre-registrations outnumber adult pre-registrations about 2 to 1. One of our partners this year, iHeartRadio, has been promoting the conference through each of their local stations, which has been extremely helpful in getting the word out. The conference is taking place on the first day of National Crime Victims Rights Week, which has generated additional interest in the event. Tentatively, Governor Hogan will be in attendance, but details are still being worked out. Currently, there are more than 20 groups signed up to staff a table at the Choose Respect Resource Fair. MCPS will be providing buses to the event from three schools (Montgomery Blair, Sherwood, and Quince Orchard), and possibly additional schools if there is a demand for it. Debbie Feinstein, Tom Manion and Rebecca Smondrowski have also met with all MCPS Middle School and High School principals to promote the conference over the last few weeks.

Debbie Feinstein additionally reported that there have been requests for workshops in English and Spanish for both parents and students, and the committee is working with MCPS to provide instantaneous translation at the event during the opening and closing sessions. Workshops will be available in Spanish for students and parents as well.

Debbie Feinstein further reported that there were more than 100 entries from more than 20 schools in the PSA contest this year. Judging is currently underway, and we are also working with MCPS to allow students to view the Top 5 videos and vote for their favorite. The winner will receive an additional "Fan Favorite" prize, which is being co-sponsored by the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority and Montgomery County Police Department.

Debbie Feinstein lastly reported that the committee is re-designing the FJC multi-language cards, and will have more information on this at the next meeting.

B. Victim Services Committee

Thomas Manion reported that the county's Assessment Lethality Emergency Response Team (ALERT) has undergone a reformatting. This multi-disciplinary team previously met weekly to discuss and collaborate on high risk domestic violence cases. Now, this team has been converted to a primarily electronic collaboration, allowing team members to collaborate on cases in real-time, as opposed to waiting for the once-per-week meetings. The reformatting has gone over extremely well, and feedback has been positive. All problematic issues are being dealt with as they arise. The team will continue to meet in person to review and update cases once every other month at the FJC.

Thomas Manion additionally reported that he has started holding regular meetings of all on-site FJC agencies and programs to promote increased communication, efficiency and collaboration among partners.

Thomas Manion lastly reported that the FJC is in the process of hiring new Client Assistants, and that we will be short-staffed for the time being. There are protocols in place to ensure that the impact of reduced staffing levels is minimal. The new DVCC Program Manager should be hired sometime during the month of May.

C. Offender Program and Policy Committee

Angela Talley (Chair) was unable to attend the meeting. Bill Sollod reported that the Offender Program and Policy Committee's next meeting is happening in a few weeks, and the committee will be identifying new objectives to pursue for this year at that time.

D. Legislative and Policy Planning Committee

Dorothy Fait (Chair) was unable to attend the meeting, but will have a substantial update at the next meeting, which takes place after the conclusion of the legislative session. Debbie Feinstein reported that she recently testified on legislation that would close a loophole currently allowing individuals convicted of certain crimes to own antique firearms. Karla Smith inquired about possible legislation that could enhance the sentence for destroying a victim's phone.

VI. Adjournment

Councilmember Sidney Katz, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 6:00 PM

**The next DVCC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, May 11, 2017 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM
at the Family Justice Center**



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